

I. HISTORY ON THE SMALL SCALE

History is not just about big events, major cities, and important people. The small, the humble, and the obscure also have their place in our understanding of the past. Likewise, cultural resource management should not concern itself only with new highway construction and other major projects. Even the smallest transportation improvement project can touch on traces of the past, and even the smallest historical or archaeological research project can help us learn about our heritage.

This report describes the results of archaeological and historical research undertaken at three small properties in New Castle County, Delaware (Figure 1). The properties were the site of the

Newark Light Rail Station; the Hessler Industrial Park, proposed site of the IM-240 emissions testing facility; and the intersection of Routes 7 and 58, where substantial improvements are planned. These projects provided an opportunity to study three small areas in considerable detail. At one of the areas, it turned out that hardly anything could be learned about what might have happened there. The other two areas looked unpromising, since they were both overgrown lots most recently used for dumping trash. But, through archaeological survey and documentary research, we were able to learn a good deal about the two sites, and they turned out to have interesting histories involving important themes in American life. Studies like these remind us that

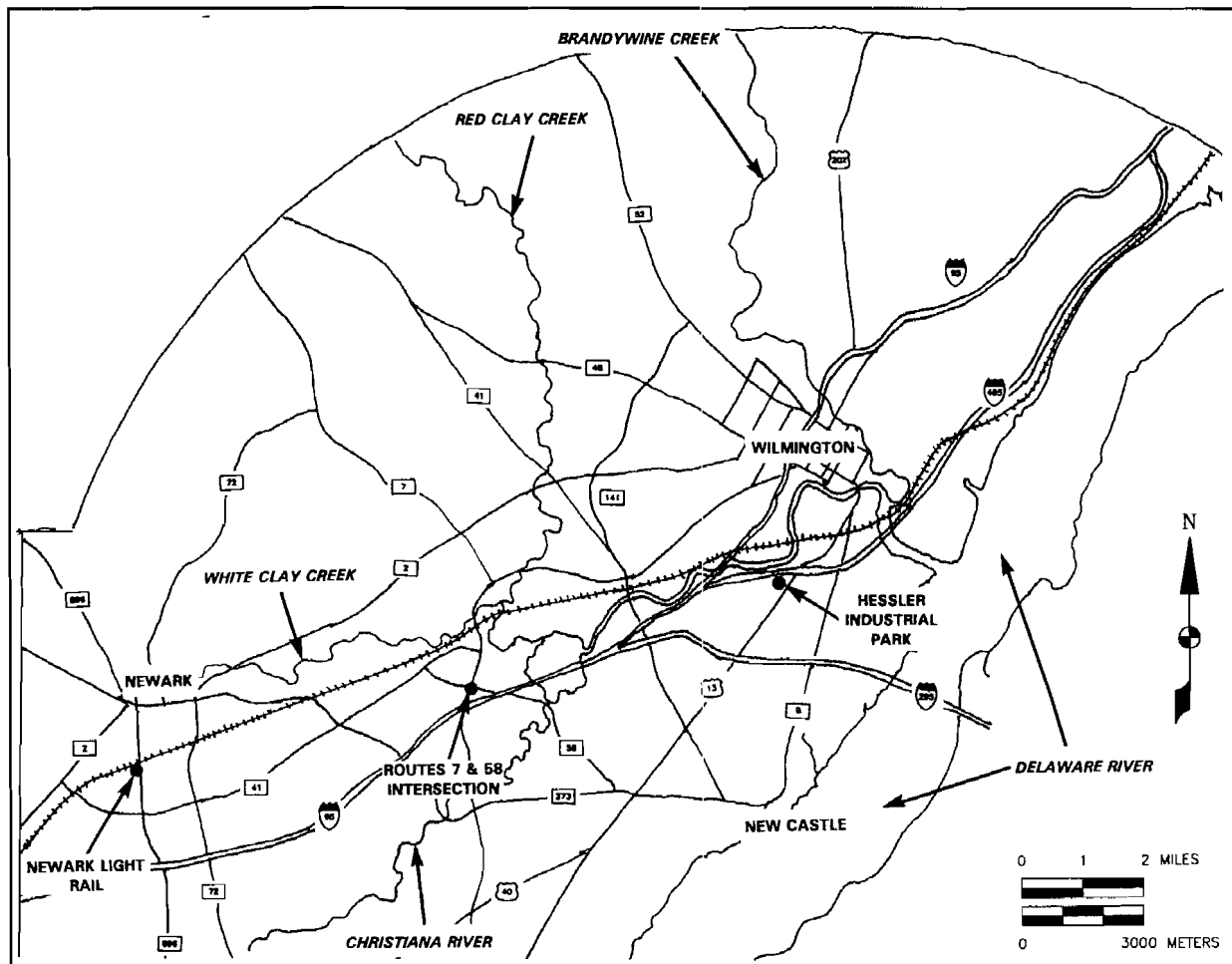


FIGURE 1: Locations of the Projects

rich stories often lie behind the most common features of the landscape. Every lot and building you pass along the road has a history, as does every person you meet and every object that passes through your hands.

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Preservation Plan (Ames et al. 1989) and other state planning documents, including the *Management Plan*

for Delaware's Historical Archaeological Resources (De Cunzo and Catts 1990), the *Management Plan for Delaware's Prehistoric Archaeological Resources* (Custer 1986), and various historic contexts (Custer 1994; De Cunzo and Garcia 1992). The project areas are located in the Piedmont and Upper Peninsula management zones. These investigations were carried out in 1995, and the results were originally reported in three management summaries (Bedell 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). The management summaries were written in technical language and were intended only for professionals involved in the review process. The present report is intended to make the results of the research available to a wider audience, and it is therefore written in a more accessible style.

The Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) sponsored this research in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and other federal legislation intended to protect our historic heritage from destruction. Guidance for obeying these laws is provided in regulations issued by the United States Department of the Interior, the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation, and the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Important information on finding, interpreting, and determining the importance of archaeological sites in Delaware is provided by the *Delaware Comprehensive Historic*